



CITY AND COUNTY OF NORWICH.

SUMMARY

OF

ANNUAL REPORT

OF

THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

For the War Year 1916.

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Summary of Annual Report.

TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE NORWICH
URBAN SANITARY AUTHORITY.

MY LORD MAYOR AND GENTLEMEN,

In accordance with a resolution passed by the Health Committee I submit a summary of, in place of my detailed Annual Report for the year 1916.

The General Register Office having advised that the civil population, in calculating mortality returns, should be estimated at (in round numbers) 113,000 ; *death rates* are based upon that figure ; *birth rates* are calculated upon a population estimated by the G.R.O. at 123,000.

The birth-rate for the year, calculated from figures supplied by the G.R.O., was 19.0 per 1000 of the population at all ages—and is the lowest we have ever recorded. (There was, fortunately, an increased saving of infant life.)

The gross recorded death-rate, 16.0 per 1000 of the population at all ages, is higher than that for 1915, viz. : 14.5.

The infantile mortality rate, 99 per 1000 *births*, compares favourably with that, 114, for 1915. (Of the infants born there was a female majority of 35.) 189 of the infants born were illegitimate—38 more than in 1915. The special infantile mortality rate among these *illegitimate* infants was at the rate of 148 per 1000 *births*. In connection with the care and oversight of illegitimate children, I cannot speak too highly of the services rendered by the Norwich Guild of Help for Girls (Hon. Sec., Mrs. Whitty, 17, The Crescent), a Society deserving warmly to be more generally supported ; its methods are tactful, humane, and unobtrusive.

The zymotic death-rate, 0·65 per 1000, is fractionally above that for 1915, viz. : 0·59 ; but *the special death-rate for diarrhæal diseases up to 2 years of age* which the Local Government Board asks us separately to record, 15·3 per 1000 *births*, is lower than that recorded in 1915, viz. : 17·65.

During the year the Health Visitors (who also act as School Nurses), paid 17,893 visits and re-visits to dwellings—4,611 of them in connection with medical inspections of children in the schools. At their suggestion, 145 houses and 527 persons were cleansed, 8 of the latter compulsorily. Of 1,754 of the *newly-born* infants visited, 90 per cent. were at the time of the visit being fed from the breast, 10 only being found who were fed wholly or in part with *long-tube* bottles ; 387 of the infants were ailing at the time of the first visit, or roughly, one in 4·5. 116 of the mothers were reported to be “ badly nourished.” (In respect of these latter, on my recommendation, the Sick Poor Society gave its ready and highly-valued help.) Bad methods of feeding were changed for better ones in 179 instances. 43 still-births were notified (and specially reported on), and the births of 20 sets of twins, and 1 of triplets. 252 babies were fed more or less completely on *dried milk* supplied from my office—the infants being seen at the Infant Welfare Centre, and weighed at intervals, with, on the whole, very satisfactory, and, in some instances, with quite remarkable results. Of the dwellings visited, those with only one bedroom (10 per cent.) contained an average population of 3·75 persons at all ages ; those having two bedrooms (37·5 per cent), 4·3 persons at all ages or 2·15 per bedroom ; those with three bedrooms (45 per cent.), 5·2 persons at all ages, or 1·7 per bedroom ; those with four bedrooms (6·5 per cent.), 5·8 persons at all ages or 1·4 per bedroom.

The Infant Welfare Centre was established on the ground floor at the old Eye Infirmary, Pottergate Street, in April ; and has been very successful ; as many as 67 infants being brought on one occasion ; indeed, I have seriously to consider the prospective necessity for holding more afternoon clinics to avoid relative over-crowding ;

but I cannot advise the making of permanent arrangements until I get my full staff (*a*) of doctors and (*b*) of Health Visitors and (*c*) know where we shall definitely be quartered—all the existing arrangements being tentative and all dependent upon the duration of the war. Arrangements have been made for pre-natal consultation, with a local obstetrician, and for the admission of certain cases, requiring special care during their confinements, to the Maternity Institution. I am the more pleased to record the success that already has been attained by, and at our Infant Welfare Centre, because it has been so unobtrusively and honestly obtained. There has been no attempt to seek an adventitious notoriety, which, indeed, I heartily distrust and as cordially despise.

Tuberculous Diseases.—During the year the total number of notifications which reached me was 175 :—147 of tuberculosis of the lungs (Phthisis) and 28 of other forms of the disease. (In 1915 the corresponding figures were 179 and 22.) To 120 of these cases 1,713 visits were made by officers of the Public Health Department, the visits being unnecessary or unwelcome in the others. Of the total numbers 52 per cent. were males, and 48 per cent. females ; 34 per cent. married, 63 per cent. single and 3 per cent. widows or widowers ; 14 per cent. were under 15 years of age, 33 per cent. over 15 and under 25, 40 per cent. over 25, and under 45, and the remaining 13 per cent. over 45 years of age. In the 120 cases reported on there was evidence of tuberculous taint in the family history of 35 per cent. ; 22 per cent. were following their usual occupation, 6 per cent. were housewives, 3 per cent. school children, and 69 per cent. were not following their customary employment. At the time of the first visit 65 per cent. had a separate bedroom, 10 per cent. a separate bed in a double-bedded room, and 25 per cent. shared a bed with another person (6 of the affected dwellings possessed only one bedroom). 56 per cent. of the persons notified were insured, 18 per cent. dependants of insured persons, and 26 per cent. uninsured. 36 per cent. had received special treatment in Sanatoria, or as in-patients in hospitals, and 4 per cent. as out-

patients. There were 149 deaths from Phthisis, and 58 from other forms of tuberculous disease, 10 of the former and also of the latter in the Norfolk & Norwich Hospital, 2 of the latter in the Isolation Hospital, 8 in the Jenny Lind Infirmary, and 6 in the Union Infirmary. In the Union Infirmary there were on January 1, 1916, 20 Phthisical cases, 53 were admitted during the year, and there were 30 deaths from Phthisis. The 42 callings of the persons who died from Phthisis in the city included :—27 housewives, 20 of “ no occupation,” of whom 19 were women, 19 boot-workers (4 of them women), 11 soldiers and ex-soldiers, 10 labourers and 6 clerks.

The number of notifications of, and of deaths from (a) the notifiable diseases were 10 of *Cerebro-Spinal-Meningitis* (“ spotted fever ”), and 4 deaths, 1 a soldier ; 234 of *Scarlet Fever* in 180 dwellings (14 in Institutions), and 2 deaths ; 291 of *Diphtheria* in 229 dwellings, and 20 deaths ; 24 of *Enteric Fever*, with 4 deaths ; 4 of *Puerperal Fever* (no death) ; 1 of *Acute Poliomyelitis* ; 44 of *Erysipelas* with 7 deaths ; 25 of *Ophthalmia neonatorum* ; 313 of *Ordinary and German Measles*, with 2 deaths ; and 161 from *Whooping Cough*, 7 deaths ; *Diarrhœa*, 31 deaths (24 under 1 year of age) ; *Influenza*, 31 ; *Tetanus* (war wounds), 1. There were 43 deaths attributed to other *septic diseases*, and 176 to *malignant* (cancerous) *growths*—26 more than in 1915.

The total number of cases of infectious diseases *admitted to the Isolation Hospital* was 503, and as there were 71 *in the Hospital* on January 1, the total number treated was 574 (in 1915 it was 654). The cases admitted included 206 with *Scarlet Fever*, 237 with *Diphtheria*, 12 with *Enteric Fever*, 6 with *Cerebro-Spinal Fever*, 9 with *mixed infections*, and 33 with other diseases. The total number of *deaths* was 22—distributed as follows :—*Scarlet Fever*, 2 ; *Diphtheria*, 12 ; *Enteric Fever*, 2 ; *Cerebro-Spinal Fever*, 1 ; other diseases, 5. The average *daily number of patients* was 49 (maximum, 75, minimum 22) ; and the average length of stay *for all diseases* was $34\frac{1}{2}$ days ; on December 31 33 patients remained under treatment. Of the cases of *Cerebro-Spinal Fever* admitted during the

year 1 was a "carrier," and 1 admitted as C. Sp. F. proved on bacteriological examination not to be so; in the other 4 cases there was a history of previous shock, or overstrain. 3 members of the staff developed Scarlet Fever, and 4 contracted Diphtheria—all recovering satisfactorily. In the Hospital Laboratory 27 "Widals" were made, 70 examinations for tubercle, and 2,187 swabs were examined chiefly for Diphtheria.

1,131 certificates of freedom from infection were given to school children, "contacts," etc., to enable the recipients to resume attendance at school, or to return to work after the outbreak of infectious or contagious illness in the dwellings.

Midwives' Act.—There were 21 midwives on our register for 1916, 4 of them (not practising) Health Visitors, and 5 connected with the Maternity Institution. Miss Hatton, C.M.B., was appointed Inspector of Midwives early in the year, and has maintained a constant supervision over the midwives practising in the city with very satisfactory results.

Factory and Workshops' Act.—24 Inspections of factories and workshops, and 15 defects reported on and remedied; 119 lists of outworkers were sent in, 84 of them twice, and 948 inspections of outworkers' premises were made. We found work being done on unsatisfactory premises (Section 108), but in none of the cases did we find it necessary to issue formal notices, the defects being remedied voluntarily. Infectious disease occurred in out-workers' dwellings (Sections 109–110), but in these cases also verbal representations only were required. The total number of workshops on the register was 574, and of factories, 395. There remained 4 underground bakeries (Section 101), in use at the end of the year. In 7 instances the Inspector of Factories referred nuisances remediable under the Public Health Acts, but not under the Factory and Workshops Act.

Food and Drugs Act.—221 samples were purchased, and submitted for analysis (9 of the milks to bacteriological investigation

for tubercle bacilli), and 4 of the samples *were specially taken under the Milk and Cream Regulations*. 188 of the samples were certified to be genuine, and 33 to be adulterated (32 of milk and 1 of butter). In 20 cases taken before the Magistrates fines varying from £5 to 10s. were imposed in 18 instances ; 9 vendors were written to and cautioned, and in 3 cases no proceedings were taken.

The report of the Chief Sanitary Inspector, summarized, shows that 2,730 nuisances were detected, 5,376 re-inspections made of premises, 3,221 "special" complaints attended to, 1,092 rooms disinfected, 1,046 billets for soldiers inspected, and 6,104 visits paid to courts and yards ; that there are 39 slaughter-houses, and that to these 5,423 visits have been paid ; that the markets have been regularly visited and inspected ; that 14 carcasses of beef, 10 of pork, 18 of mutton and 2 of veal were among the 1000 odd items, or collections of unsound food destroyed ; that water taken from wells proved "passable" ; that there are 59 cowsheds on the register with 540 cows ; 26 dairies and 167 milk-shops ; that the common lodging-houses have been visited weekly ; that 359 visits were paid to houses let in lodgings ; that 16 inspections were made of caravans, 14 smoke observations taken, and 53 inspections made under the Shops Act (1912-1913) ; 89 special visits paid to piggeries and 373 to bake-houses ; that 334 inspections were made of premises in connection with the Margarine Act ; that 1,221 loads of privy bin refuse were removed by the night waggons, and 23,736 loads of house refuse by the day (12,911 loads of refuse were sent by wherry from the Fishergate wharf) ; and that large numbers of hand-bills, asking householders to burn light combustible refuse, pointing out the danger of collections of refuse as breeding grounds for flies, and the desirability of saving fat and bones, etc., etc., were distributed.

The Norwich Corporation Act, 1889, and the Public Health Amendment Act, 1890, the Public Health Acts Amendment Acts, 1907, are the general adoptive Acts in force in the district.

The presence in the city, and more particularly from October to April, of some thousands of troops, necessarily has added to our duties, especially in connection with the preparation of food (alike for soldiers here and elsewhere), supervision of the sanitary condition of billets and the prevention of infectious illness. And it is only fitting that I affirm that every member of the Public Health Department has worked cheerfully and efficiently, and coped successfully with all emergencies. These added labours have been rendered the more acceptable (apart altogether from our irrepressible patriotism) by the cordial relationships which have been maintained between these strangers in our midst and ourselves.

(Signed)

HARRY COOPER PATTIN.

Longest Day, 1917.

